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A TREATISE ON THE LAW OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE. Illustrated by numerous Cases. By Arthur P. Will, of the Chicago Bar. Philadelphia; T. & J. W. Johnson & Co. 1896. pp. xvi, 555.

The subject of circumstantial evidence does not warrant separate treatment at such length. It is not surprising, therefore, to find much in these five hundred odd pages that would naturally be looked for in a general work on evidence. The author devotes considerable space to the subject of confessions, because, he says (p. 112), the rules as to their admissibility "are of great moment in their application to such particulars of circumstantial evidence as are in the nature of confessional evidence." The net result for his purposes seems to be a demonstration at unnecessary length of the unreliability of all evidence of this nature.

A feature of the book is the statement of a large number of illustrative cases; indeed, this is carried so far that it would seem as if it were considered a good substitute for discussion. As an exhaustive collection of the cases is not attempted, the book cannot take the place of a digest, while for the student the full reports are more valuable, unless the statement of cases is accompanied with analysis. It is to be noticed, however, that the author has selected for his illustrations many very recent decisions.

The failure of this method of treatment is very apparent in the section dealing with "Evidence of Previous Attempts and other Crimes" (p. 57), and again in the chapter on the "Presumption of Innocence." On page 234 it is said, "The presumption of innocence, though not strictly evidence, yet has, to the extent it goes, the effect of evidence,—sufficiently so in a doubtful case to turn the scale in his favor and produce his acquittal." It is strange that the cases of *Coffin v. U. S.*, 156 U. S. 432, and *Cockran v. U. S.*, 157 U. S. 286, are not cited here. While one is ready to agree that this so called presumption is not evidence (see 9 HARVARD LAW REVIEW, 144), further light on this troublesome question would be welcome. In the unsatisfactory condition of the authorities, that anything of value is to be derived from the statement of illustrative cases alone is not to be expected.

E. S.

THE TORRENS LAW AS TO TITLE REGISTRY IN OHIO, including Interpretation, by Members of the Commission who drafted said Law for Ohio, as to its Meaning, Application, etc., with Brief History of Land Title Registry Laws. By Florian Giauque. Cincinnati: The Robert Clarke Co. 1896. pp. 58.

This little pamphlet contains the full text of the title registration law adopted in Ohio, which will become operative in January next. Appended are letters from the commissioners who framed the act, explaining briefly the changes made by the legislature in the draft submitted by them. This act is of interest because a judicial determination of title is provided for before registry. In this it is a departure from the original Torrens system, which for various reasons, among them delay and expense, the Illinois commissioners were unwilling to adopt. The method of determining title which they did provide, however, was the feature of the act declared unconstitutional by the Illinois court.

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